1: Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1920)1932
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of the cows. If she went back home you would claim the cows back from her father, who is your own "father," and this would interfere with the sacrifices to your father and father's father.'

Marriage Customs: These appear to be almost identical with those of the Nankanse, as will be seen from the following: The suitor approaches the father of the girl, who refers him to his eldest brother, or father, if alive. The suitor brings tobacco to the girl's father and mother; they show these gifts to the head of the compound. Three or four days later the suitor will bring a dead guinea-fowl and give it to his future mother-in-law. This gift is called *pɔ-bore-bono* (something with which to seek a wife). Later, the suitor will send a live fowl and guinea-fowl and corn by a messenger known as *ahen* (*isiga* in Nankane). These offerings will be given to the girl's *seyr* (guardian spirit) by the head of her house, who will say: 'Receive these things; the girl has reached puberty; she is ready to go to her husband; the day they bore her, they gave her to you.' The girl now goes to the bridegroom's town, to the compound of the *ahen* (who is a son of a woman who came from the bride's town). There she remains three days, after which she goes to her husband. Sometimes the cows have to be paid before the girl leaves her father's compound; they are then known as *lay bo* (*leka* in Nankane). Sometimes they are paid long after marriage and are then called *sull' bono*. After the bride has gone to her husband's compound, her brothers will go there, and her husband will kill a dog for them, and a fowl and some goats. After they have returned home, the bridegroom will send the *ahen* with a live cock to the section-head who is 'half-brother' to the head of the section to which the bride belongs, and also a dead guinea-fowl to the bride's mother. These gifts are called *sandan* (compare Nankane *sandono*). Without this formality the marriage is not legal, however many cows are paid, nor may the husband claim adultery damages. This gift is to obtain a witness. If the woman later leaves her husband, the same *ahen* will claim back the cows.

Funeral Customs: The following account of a Talense funeral was given me by the *Ten'dan'* of Tɔngo:

'When a man dies I have to make the grave.' (This is not to be taken literally; he will be represented by a brother or son.) 'I go to the spot with ashes in a red pot and mark out the grave in a circle. I then dig a little and hand the axe (*lebo*) to the *bayas* (sextons) and they continue to dig the grave (*yeog'*). I then begin to sacrifice. The *kunran* (the person in charge of the funeral custom) gives me a fowl (not a

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583 604 *The Number of Cows given for Sul* (bride-price). The number varies from two to five, according to what competition there is for the girl's hand. 'When a man's wife dies, and the cows have not yet been handed over, they must be paid. If this is not done, the parents-in-law may not ask for them, but some day, when the dead woman's son is at his uncle's house to attend some ceremony, they will refuse to allow him to participate.' Again, should his mother's mother ever express the wish to have a 'room', i.e. a shrine in charge of her grandson, this shrine can only be built by his mother's brothers. They will refuse to do this and so compel the payment of the *sul*. This sanction is very typical.

583 768 The cows paid for a woman become the property of the head of her house, not necessarily of her father. I asked if her mother got any, and was greeted with faces expressing almost consternation at the very thought of such a thing. 'She has been receiving five baskets of grain all the time from her son-in-law, why should she get any of the cows, and besides if my wife dies without a son, her relatives will come and claim all her property.' He added, 'Our ancestors too did not make a good law about a man (a clansman) getting our widows for nothing and any children we had by them.' As the heir may take them, this is not really any great hardship.

584 585 591 A marriage may be arranged by the parents when both the children are quite young. When the boy reaches puberty, his father will tell his elder brother, who is head of the compound, that the time has come for his son to marry. The father of the girl with whom the marriage has been arranged will make beer and call the senior 'father' of the youth and they will drink together. The father of the girl will then take his daughter's hand and give her to his friend, saying, 'There is your wife'. The 'father' of the youth then returns to his town, leaving the girl behind. A few days later, the girl is sent to his town accompanied by an old woman. She stays with the bridegroom's father's senior wife. A few days later, the 'father' of the bridegroom will send a member of his section with beer and a guinea-fowl to the bride's town, not to her 'father', but to the head of the section. This beer is to inform the spirits and the living about the marriage. It is called *sindan dam* (compare *sandono* in Nankanse marriage custom). Unless the *sindan* beer is given, the marriage is not considered legal; 'a man must cook this beer'. After the bride has spent three or four days at the bridegroom's compound, the boy's real father will tell his brother that he wishes to give the girl to his son. The senior wife

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of the head of the compound will, one evening, tell the bride to take fire (a faggot) to the bridegroom's hut in order that she may have light 'to sweep the floor', and she will add, 'you need not return'. Next morning people will know that the girl is So-and-so's wife. (I asked my informant if the youth for whom this marriage had been arranged knew all about it. He replied: 'The father of the youth would always be performing small services for his *dem* (in-laws), such, for example, as sending them fire-wood. The future bridegroom would be used as a messenger on such occasions and in this manner would get to know his future wife.') A man's senior 'father' is responsible for finding the cows for the bride-price (*sul*). If a man wants a second or third wife, he will help his father by giving some of his own cows, if he has got any by his own labours. 'If your father is too poor and your mother's brother is a rich man, he may pay for the cows for your wife, but that becomes a debt, for if you do not pay him back, he will claim your children after your death. You will pay him back by using the cows you receive for your own daughter.'

'A son-in-law will work on his *dem-pok's* ground-nut farm (*suma-pog*) once a year and help her in the sowing and harvest, and also assist his father-in-law in building. He will do all this until his wife bears him a child and then cease doing so, because then he will be looking out for a new wife and have then to work for these new in-laws. Every new harvest he will take new beer (*da'-palem*) and a guinea-fowl and go with his wife to visit his parents-in-law. On this occasion, the wife becomes like a man, by virtue of her husband, and gives the guinea-fowl as an offering to her father's spirit, or if he is alive, to his *Wen* (*Yini* shrine). If she were an unmarried girl at home, she could not do so. A son-in-law attends his parents-in-law's funeral, taking a sheep and goat and beer. He will also attend a brother-in-law's funeral taking a pot of beer "to pour on the grave" (*se yaug*). A son-in-law will also assist in digging a parent-in-law's grave, and even sleep at his village and resume digging next morning and dig out all the stones. When we dig a grave and come down to rock, we generally place an egg there, and fill in the hole, but when a man has many sons-in-law they will dig up the rock. As long as a man's wife has not borne a child, the son-in-law must send his mother-in-law five baskets of grain each new harvest. He stops doing so when she has a child, for after that they will at once demand payment of the *sul* (bride-price).'

'A man must respect his parents-in-law; if he offends them, he

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834 765 768 will be given beer, and if the deceased woman had any private property, it will be taken away by her relations, but half will be given to her eldest daughter. This refers only to such property as is used by women; any live stock she may have possessed goes to her eldest son. On the day when these things are cast away at the cross-roads, her husband bathes in a decoction of roots (*pɔkɔ-tim*)[1] and shaves his head. 'By doing so he removes the *deat* (uncleanliness.)' He may then resume cohabitation with his wives after the funeral guests have all scattered. A widower is made to undergo an ordeal to see if he has observed this sexual abstinence. He is made to pass through the door of the *zɔŋ* hut. If he has been guilty, he will be beaten by his brother and run away from the town until he comes and begs for forgiveness.

834 It is a worse offence for a widow to commit adultery before her husband's funeral custom is over, than for her to do so during his life-time, but the latter is also an offence against the land. A husband who commits adultery with a married woman is 'not fit to descend into the valley', i.e. go to war. 'In olden days a young unmarried girl would not have sexual intercourse with any man but the one whom she was going to marry.' To have sexual intercourse with a woman at her own parents' compound is to preclude the possibility of marriage with that woman. 'Even after marriage a man may not do so, he would "spoil" his parents-in-law's compound.'

572 584 The Kusase indulge in a kind of platonic friendship between the sexes known as *saboa*. A wife, with the full knowledge and consent of her husband, has a 'lover' who does little jobs for the husband, but this is only because 'the man wishes to marry her daughter or some girl from his "lover's" section' (compare Nankane, *yi pɔk zabero*); he may not even sit on the same mat as his 'lover').

764 Should a wife die when visiting her own parents, the funeral will be brought back to her husband's village (*ba ne mor kur na*). Her waist-strings, and a little piece of the mat on which the corpse was laid is put in her calabash and carried back to the husband's compound. These will be placed in a room until the day of the funeral, when the piece of mat is thrown away, and the waist-strings buried. If the town where she died is not far away, however, the body itself will be brought home.

787 *Consulting the Soothsayer after a Person's Death*: 'When a man reaches his time and dies, we do not consult, only in case of "a strong death".' Hoes, used in digging graves, have the wooden handles knocked out

[1] These roots are later buried on the kitchen midden (*tampur*).

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they may come from. For these women feel themselves to be as closely akin to one another as members of the same clan, by contraposition with the Tallensi whom they have married.

The *pɔyayabəlis* act together as a single group under the leadership of the oldest among them at funeral ceremonies. The young girls perform such tasks as bringing in the great bundles of firewood required for cooking the beer. The older *pɔyayabəlis*, expert in the preparation of beer, undertake that task themselves. The younger women do the more strenuous jobs connected with cooking, such as grinding flour and preparing the other ingredients of a meal. The older women cook the porridge and meat relishes required for such rites as the setting out of consecrated food for the dead. All food required for ritual use is prepared by the *pɔyayabəlis*, since all the ritual is the preserve of the clan. As members of the clan they can be associated with the ritual activities of the clan, and as women they can carry out tasks which are appropriate to their sex in accordance with the usual division of labour. The *dubɛnib* do not prepare the food required for ritual purposes, but only the food used to give hospitality to clansmen, kinsmen, and other visitors.

The *pɔyayabəlis* have also to be directly represented by one of them, most appropriately by one of the older women, in many of the rites. A *pɔyayabəlɔg* has to assist in such rites as the offering of the initial sacrifices to the spirit of the departed and to the ancestors he or she is about to join. A *pɔyayabəlɔg* and a man of the clan see to the ritual feeding of the orphans, which takes place at different stages of the ceremonies. The various mourning strings (*miis*) which the orphans and widows have to wear during the funeral ceremonies are tied on, and at the end removed, by an elderly *pɔyayabəlɔg*. The setting out of consecrated food for the dead is always done by one male and one female member of the clan. And then, when the final divination takes place, a man and a woman of the lineage together carry out the simple rite of restoring the dead person's body dirt (*dayat*), the symbol of his individual self, to the house where his life was spent, and whither he now returns as a spirit to whom sacrifice must be offered.

Lastly, a married *pɔyayabəlɔg* is a link between her paternal clan and her husband's clan, both in herself and in the line of descent which springs from her. This is evident nowadays from the role of the *pɔyasama* —a clansman of the bridegroom and a matrilateral kinsman of the bride's lineage—as an intermediary in marriage negotiations. It was shown in former days in peace-making ceremonies. If two clans, or groups of clans, had been at war, peace was concluded by a ritual reconciliation. In this the opponents were usually represented by a *pɔyayabəlɔg* of each side who was married to a member of the other side, who was therefore bound by jural and moral ties to both sides and had strong emotional attachments to both, and thus symbolized the underlying interdependence of the opponents.

Lineage and clan consist of both their male and their female members. Though the women do not contribute to the continuity and perpetuation of the lineage, they are a source of strength to it. This is most obvious in the fact that the bride-price paid for them adds to the resources by

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602 interests and solidarity. This applies to women as well, if in a slightly lesser degree. Moreover, close cognates of different clans keep in touch sufficiently to know a great deal about one another's personal life.

592 In spite of this, domestic privacy is well guarded, for the essential life of the family goes on inside the homestead. There is a basis for this 262 in the rules of residence and in the domestic economy. Residential 576 autonomy is an index of economic autonomy. A household produces almost the whole of the food-supplies it consumes. Its neighbours, however closely related they are, can guess as to the sufficiency but cannot know the exact quantity of a household's food-supplies. Only the head of the household knows this. As we have seen, a major factor of differentiation between and within domestic units is the organization of food production and consumption. One can see this any evening when the chief meal of the day is eaten. It is prepared by the women and consumed by all the members of the household producing the grain. Meals are not regularly shared between separate households, even within the same domestic unit. The correct thing is for a person to take his usual meals at home amidst his own family. Most Tallensi would starve rather than deliberately scrounge (*bimli*) a meal off a kinsman who farms separately, even if the latter lives in the same homestead. Tallensi would think it a disgrace if their children made a habit of going to feed with neighbours, as is the custom in some primitive societies. A hungry child comes to its mother for food; it will not go to a neighbouring homestead in the hope of getting something to eat.

576 The etiquette of social intercourse indicates as clearly the degree to which domestic privacy is taken for granted. A visitor always announces 574 himself at the gateway. A kinsman, neighbour, or friend calls out, 521 informally, the name of the person he wishes to see, a stranger calls out *gafarra* ('excuse me'), and waits to be asked in. At night the family is usually gathered together inside its own homestead. In fine weather, especially if the moon is bright, men, women, and children spread themselves out in the senior woman's *dondɔŋo*, relaxing after the evening meal. If it is a large family a visitor will find them sprawling at ease in what seems a completely higgledy-piggledy huddle. The infants sleep in their mothers' arms, the smaller children doze on the hard gravel floor, the older children chatter in twos and threes, the grown-ups and the young men and girls talk of the day's happenings, yarn and gossip, or play at riddles. Generally, several different conversations go on at the same time. There may be visitors, a neighbour come on some business or suitors come courting one of the girls. A visitor can be seen in entire privacy. He or she is taken into one of the rooms, and no one would be so lacking in manners as to intrude. A young man visits his sweetheart [584] thus in her own home, and is entertained by her in complete privacy. Other members of the family know all about it, of course, but the sweethearts need not fear being disturbed.

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concerned with the marriages of its members. Beyond the range of the inner lineage but within that of the medial lineage there is some doubt as to whether intercourse with a woman member is incestuous or not.[1] Feeling varies according to the span of the unit and the number of segments it includes. Beyond the range of the medial lineage it is not uncommon for men to have affairs with women of their own maximal lineage or clan. The attitude towards incest with a sister or daughter is stretched to the point of complete tolerance. Sexual relations with a distant clan-sister (*pɔyayabəlɔg*) do not clash with the habits, morals, and organization of family life nor with those of lineage or clan relationships. Indeed, the structure of the society practically compels a man who wants a lover (*gab*) to seek for one among his own clanswomen. Any woman not genealogically related to him is someone he is allowed to marry. His sexual interest in her is an interest in her for the sake of offspring. The Tallensi attach so much importance to marriage that they think it absurd and despicable for a man to desire only a sexual liaison with a woman he can legitimately marry. Owing to this and to their tacit appreciation of the critical function of the sexual relationship in marriage, they have the utmost scorn for anyone who tries to seduce a girl he is courting. One of the strictest points of the etiquette of courtship is that the man must make no sexual advances to the girl; inquiries prove beyond doubt that it is extremely rare for courting couples to break this rule. For, apart from etiquette, it would also be an infringement of the taboo against a man's having sexual intercourse with a woman of his father-in-law's—or potential father-in-law's—clan in the latter's settlement.

A distant clanswoman is in a different position. One cannot marry her, but at the same time she is not so closely identified with one or so familiar as a sister. She is not felt to belong to oneself as one's sister or daughter is. Her genealogical and social identification with one's clan seems to be merely a formal usage and this is enhanced by the knowledge that she will marry out. She is the unmarriageable stranger. One can desire her and enjoy her for sexual gratification without an interest in her reproductive powers and without prejudice to her later legitimate marriage. A girl's clan-brother lover is often the most influential go-between in her courtship. Sexual intercourse with a married clanswoman is, of course, adultery from her husband's point of view. It may create trouble between her husband's inner lineage and her own. The head of her inner lineage will demand apologies from the head of her lover's inner lineage and may insist on a ritual reconciliation. There will also have to be a ritual reconciliation between the adulterer and the woman's husband's lineage. Cases of adultery very often take this form and that is one reason why husbands do not like young wives to stay long at their parents' homes.

[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 204.

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606 It is base to seduce an affine's wife, or the wife of his near clansman, anywhere, but it is abominable to do it at the injured man's own house. Strictly speaking, 'polluting the room' refers to the seduction of a father-in-law's wife, or the wife of his close agnate, at his house or in his settlement. If a man's father-in-law or one of the latter's close agnates seduces the son-in-law's wife (of another clan than theirs), or the wife of one of his close agnates, it is generally treated as a particularly reprehensible form of adultery. The son-in-law would not, for example, necessarily divorce his wife on that account. A ritual reconciliation will be made and the matter closed. Tallensi say such offences are extremely rare, and I have never heard of a case.

835 The offence borders on a sin if it is committed by a son-in-law or someone genealogically identified with him, on the one hand because of his quasi-filial relationship with his father-in-law through his wife, and on the other because of the sex barrier between affines. The striking thing is that it is a particularly heinous case of 'polluting the room' of a father-in-law for the son-in-law to have sexual relations with his own wife at her father's house. The bond which most closely unites a married couple is the relationship that cuts the woman off most completely from her filial relationship with her paternal family. As we have noted before, if her husband has sexual relations with her in her father's house her status as wife and mother is confounded with her status as sister and daughter; her husband's status as son-in-law is confounded with his status as father and husband in his own family. If the husband did not abrogate his marital rights at his wife's father's house, an insoluble conflict would arise both on the jural level and in their emotional relations. So strict is this taboo that it extends to any man of the son-in-law's lineage, and any daughter of the father-in-law's lineage, more particularly within the limits of the medial lineage. A man may not even meet his wife face to face on the path leading from her parental home to his, if she is on her way from her parents' house to her husband's; for this would symbolize a wish to treat her as his wife at her father's house.

783 An accidental breach of this symbolic taboo can be mended, though not without difficulty, by a ritual reconciliation. A breach of the prohibition against sexual relations between husband and wife at the latter's paternal home (and *yir*, home, in this context includes the whole settlement), or the equivalent offence committed by a close agnate of the husband, is irreparable. The marriage must be broken up, and children borne of it may be taken away by the woman's father. If this is not done, disaster would fall on everybody concerned. The bride-price is forfeited by the offending husband.

584 Opportunities and temptations to break these taboos often occur, for instance when a young man takes a party of his clansmen to spend a few days with his father-in-law in order to help him with some work. A man's wife generally accompanies him on such occasions. The visitors

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expect not only to be well fed, but also to be well entertained. They expect their stay to be made pleasant by dancing, feasting, and flirtations with unmarried girls of the host's clan, and many marriages come about as the result of such contacts. Young men going on such parties are more likely to grouse at their treatment if there were not enough girls to flirt with than if they were stingily fed. But it would be a gross breach of hospitality, as well as an irreparable wrong, if any of the visitors seduced any of the girls; and the son-in-law and his wife always sleep in separate rooms.

These parties are extremely common. Towards the end of the dry season, when house-building is in progress, or in the latter half of the rainy season, when hoeing is very active, there are weeks during which a visiting party of in-laws can be found in a large settlement almost every day. Yet the sexual taboos we have mentioned are rarely broken. I was told of a few alleged cases that had occurred. But the only well-authenticated case I heard of was during my second visit to Taleland, when it came up in connexion with a court case over the woman who was concerned. The scorn and disgust with which people spoke of these cases showed how strongly the natives feel about these taboos.

The taboo against a woman's bearing her husband's child in her father's house links on to this complex of ideas. It is also a 'pollution of the room' of the father-in-law, and a very serious matter. For, as we have previously mentioned, it puts the child thus born into an anomalous position which is dangerous to his welfare. But a breach of it happens so often by accident that it does not inspire repugnance. The pollution can easily be removed by the husband's sending a placatory gift, as we have already recorded, to his father-in-law to 'clear away the blood (*vaa ziem*)' of the delivery. At the same time Tallensi do not like this to happen, and a woman near her term is not encouraged to visit her parents. I have known a man to be so angry with a wife who disobediently went to her father's house towards the end of her pregnancy and gave birth there that he refused at first to have her back.

A man also pollutes his father-in-law's room if he vomits (*ti*) in his father-in-law's house. It is unlucky. The son-in-law and his wife 'will not have it well (*ku nye sɔmma*) with them'; but amends can be made in the same way as for the birth of a child in the father-in-law's house. The symbolism is obscure and the natives cannot explain it. Vomiting is normally taken as a symptom of illness. It may be that they feel vomiting in such circumstances to be a sign of rejecting the hospitality of parents-in-law and therefore a sign of inner hostility to them. The context of this taboo suggests, however, that vomiting in a father-in-law's house is connected with the bearing of a child there, the symbolism being taken either from morning sickness or arising indirectly through the association of regurgitated food with the fluids discharged in childbirth.

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593 596 422 the claim. But if the head of the family claims an egg no one can gainsay him, so a young man might find himself left without any eggs to breed from. That is why he wishes to be independent. It is a kind of rudimentary myth summing up the economic causes of family fission. The point of interest is the emphasis on the inequitable behaviour of the 'father'. He uses his economic authority to his own advantage without making an equivalent return and thus prevents the 'son' from getting a start on the road of economic independence.

593 The adjustment of father's rights and son's rights has an added subtlety where cash is concerned. Supposing a young man returns from abroad with four or five pounds in cash that he has saved. According to the letter of custom he should hand all of it over to his father. But money, unlike a cow or a sheep, can be easily concealed and does not require attention; our young man can retain a part of his savings without his father's knowing of it. If it is his own father he may keep only a few shillings, particularly if he has recently been, or is about to be married and the money is wanted to pay his wife's bride-price. If it is his proxy father he will probably hand over only a pound or two, unless, again, the money is required for the bride-price of his wife; and then he will try not to hand over the money until his father-in-law actually demands the bride-price. It is common knowledge that this is the regular practice of young men returning from abroad. Fathers have no power to stop it, though most of them would like to; for up to a point, the young men are within their rights. Have they not 'taken their own legs and gone to get their money' by labour that is always arduous and sometimes dangerous? Again conflicts are inevitable, though as yet not more frequent than over other forms of property. For some men are only too apt to fritter away the money entrusted to them by a dependant before the time comes for it to be used for the benefit of the latter.

593 •584 As we have mentioned before, one of the heaviest responsibilities a man bears on behalf of his son, or for a dependant standing in the same economic and jural relationship to him, is in 'marriage affairs'. It is the bridegroom's father or proxy father who has to undertake the series of jural actions required from his paternal kin in order to legitimize the union. In marriage by arrangement (*pɔɣalak*) it is the bridegroom's father who starts the negotiations and carries them through. The young man himself hardly sees his bride, after his first few courting visits, until she is brought to his home. In marriage by elopement (*pɔɣazaŋər*) the bridegroom's father's consent is essential for the marriage to be properly concluded. While, as we have already indicated, a father never openly disapproves of a son's marriage, but on the contrary always displays apparent pleasure over it, he can easily cause it to break down by holding back the bride-price.

As we know already, the two significant jural acts in the conclusion of a marriage are the sending of the placation gifts (*lu sɛndaan*) and the

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payment of at least a part of the fixed bride-price of three cows and a bull, or their equivalent. The essential responsibility for the performance of these two acts lies with the bridegroom's father or father's heir, subject to the formal consent of the elders of his inner lineage. Formally, the bride's paternal kin send their invitation to the bridegroom's paternal kin to *lu sɛndaan* through the head of the latter's nuclear or inner lineage, and make their demands for bride-price through the same channels; for no jural act takes place except in the framework of the lineage system. But actually the responsibility for satisfying the bride's kin falls on the bridegroom's father. He must 'find the things'—the fowls and guinea-fowls—for the placation gifts; he must send off the intermediary (*pɔɣasama*) who carries them to the bride's family; he must furnish the animals or goods or money to pay the bride-price. 'Is it not his child? (*Pa u biiga*)' say the natives, implying that this is a duty arising out of the fact of parenthood. In part it is a specific duty; in part it is an aspect of a general responsibility that a man bears for his son's jural relations. Thus if his son's wife is abducted it is the father who calls on the other members of his inner lineage to stand by him in taking action to recover the wife. If his son has abducted another man's wife the father is directly answerable. Strictly speaking a son cannot contract a debt involving heritable property such as cattle or large sums of money without his father's authorization. Even if the son is a man of substance, a wise creditor will insist that his father's (and also his brothers' of the same nuclear lineage) consent to the transaction be obtained first and made known to him. If this is not done the creditor's chances of recovery are small. It becomes a question of one man's word against another's and Tallensi are past masters in the art of putting off a creditor. The concurrence of the debtor's father and brothers fixes liability for ever, and if the debtor dies before settling the debt his father, or his heir, is liable. These rules do not apply to small sums of money, say a shilling or two, or things of small value such as a hen or a loin-cloth. But petty borrowing and lending rarely takes place between people who are not friends or close kin, and it is thus generally fitted into the scheme of reciprocal aid that obtains between friends and kinsfolk.

In their jural aspect these obligations of a father arise from the fact of 'begetting (*dɔɣam*)'; in their economic aspect they are greatly influenced by the principle of reciprocity. Where obligations of such great social consequence are involved, the principle of reciprocity is not limited to particular individuals but it binds their heirs and successors as well owing to the operation of the lineage principle. One or two cases will show how these two aspects are interwoven.

While Tampɔyar was courting his wife he had very little recourse to his proxy father's help. The few shillings he had received from selling ground-nuts and a fowl or two sufficed to provide the occasional penny

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he gave the girl whenever he saw her in the market and the gifts of tobacco and kola nuts he took to his prospective parents-in-law. He had some guinea-fowls of his own and his proxy father gave him a few more to take as presents to his prospective mother-in-law. Just when he thought the time was ripe to elope with the girl her father warned him not to attempt it as she was under a ritual taboo which prohibited her from marrying in this way. To his chagrin Tampoyar was therefore compelled to ask his proxy father Kurug to negotiate for the girl's hand. At this point Kurug began to temporize. Marriage by arrangement is an expensive business. Had not Tampoyar better wait a while until the guinea-fowl chicks were bigger? Tampoyar's answer was a fit of sulks, a warning to his 'father' that he felt injured. Had he not stayed at home to help with the farming when he could easily have followed some of his contemporaries to Kumasi? Then he would have earned enough to pay the expenses of his marriage himself. Why should he tire himself out in farming if this was the treatment he got in return?

Meanwhile Kurug had been talking to the other men of his inner lineage about the affair. He felt that it was high time Tampoyar had a wife, and he knew that if the young man were frustrated his work during the coming farming season would suffer. Moreover, he might take it into his head to run away to Kumasi. Kurug's lineage brothers shared his views. Besides, Kurug had enough cattle to pay the bride-price at once if need be and it was his duty to get a wife for the youth. It was his duty as the boy's proxy father; it was a return he owed the boy for the labour he had been contributing for several years to the household economy; it was, also, a return he owed to Tampoyar's dead father. When the latter died Kurug had inherited his wife and his property as well as his children. Kurug had benefited from this inheritance and must now repay it to the dead man's son. And so he at length agreed to arrange the marriage. He asked one of his neighbours and clansmen, whose grandfather had been a sister's son (*ahoŋ*) of the bride-to-be's clan, to act as intermediary and began to get together the fowls and guinea-fowls that would be needed for the ceremony by which the bride is given to her future husband's lineage representatives.

Kurug himself provided the bulk of the 'things' required for this ceremony, but Tampoyar gave a couple of his own guinea-fowls. Kurug provided the basket of millet with which the bride's mother's co-wife was 'seen off home (*beeh*)' when she paid her the customary formal visit shortly after the marriage, and he provided all but one of the fowls and guinea-fowls for the placation gifts, Tampoyar himself giving one fowl. Lastly, it was Kurug who gave the two cows which Tampoyar's father-in-law demanded as the first instalment of the bride-price. These were cows to the purchase of which Tampoyar's labour had contributed; and if Kurug had died before Tampoyar's marriage, Tampoyar would have inherited them.

3: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1949
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593 capable of; the care of livestock is the responsibility primarily of the younger men and boys, whereas such tasks as house-building and thatching fall principally on the older brothers who have the necessary skill. All labour for the common needs of the household is informally directed by the household head, but every member of the unit is expected to know his duties and to carry them out in co-operation with the others. In this connexion a father may insist on a son's giving up his own plans in order to carry out a job for the common good; a man cannot demand this of a younger brother. He can only give a lead or make a suggestion and rely on the younger man's sense of responsibility and concern for the interests of the household.

593 578 ●584 Conversely, siblings of the same household are entitled to equal treatment in drawing on the common resources of the household for the satisfaction of their wants. Brothers are entitled to equal treatment in the allocation of food-supplies from the common stock if they are married. If a man has two adult sons—own sons or proxy sons—and pays the bride-price for the wife of one of them, it is considered right for the second to be assisted to marry before his brother is allowed to draw on patrimonial livestock for a second wife. Great importance is attached to this rule in family relations. Injustice in this matter arouses resentment. It is one of the causes of friction between a man and his proxy father, and between half-brothers, that leads to the secession of the injured party, or, very often nowadays, to his leaving home to seek work abroad. Tallensi claim that cases of this sort are not uncommon; but those I was able to investigate show that discrimination in this respect between *sunzɔ* brothers is usually only one element in a complex picture of motives for seceding. The point stressed by the natives, however, is the principle; and observation shows that it is more commonly honoured than not. An almost ludicrous example of this was Yinworəb's dogged efforts to find a wife for his half-brother Yimbom. He failed, alas, for no girl would stay with so unprepossessing a man as Yimbom.

593 613 The notion of sharing is especially important in the ritual relations of brothers or the descendants of brothers. Many examples of this are quoted in our previous book.[1] Its outstanding characteristic is the precise distribution of roles and division of sacrificial or ceremonial foodstuffs, beer, and meat in accordance with the lineage relationships of the participants.

593 867 This emphasis on just sharing among siblings begins in childhood, first when siblings sit down to eat from a common dish, and then in the children's play-groups. I have many times stood by watching with some amusement while a group of small children solemnly divided up a small animal they had killed, a lizard or a mouse, for instance. They are always fair, especially to the younger ones; and they follow the pattern

[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. xiii.

3: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1949
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to be treated as real siblings and 'too close' to be treated as if they were non-clansfolk in these matters. So one cannot marry a clan-sister but may have sexual relations with her, and one cannot abduct a clansman's wife, but to seduce her is not a sin. That adultery with a clansman's wife is very rare and is vehemently reprobated is a sign of the strength of clan solidarity, not of the strength of the sibling tie between clansmen.

A further point of significance is that whereas competition between brothers of the same inner lineage for wives or for politico-ritual office is held to be improper, distant clan-brothers may and do compete. No self-respecting youth would court a girl whom his brother of the same inner lineage is seeking in marriage unless it be on his brother's behalf; but it is a very common thing for several young men of the same maximal lineage or clan to court the same girl in friendly rivalry. Again, Tallensi say that until very recently, when the white man's criteria of suitability for a chiefship superseded the traditional standards, two men of the same inner lineage would never or very rarely compete for a vacant chiefship.[1] In the past, if a chiefship fell vacant, it was generally the oldest men of the clan, heads of at least medial lineages, who competed for it. Speaking of these matters Tallensi say: 'A man and his brother[2] do not like each other (*nit ni u mabiiga pu boot taaba*).' To win a chiefship, they assert, a man will not hesitate to resort secretly to medicine shrines, or to make extravagant promises to his ancestor shrines and the Earth, in order to compass the defeat of his rivals.

The Social Equivalence of Siblings Reconsidered

The solidarity and equality of siblings is a reflex of their social equivalence, but these do not mean the same thing. Equality exists between siblings; their social equivalence lies in their relations with the community at large, as has already been indicated. Many features of the configuration of sentiment and conduct we have analysed in the preceding pages acquire a new shade of meaning if we recognize them as indices of the social equivalence of siblings as well as being expressions of their equality.

Siblings are socially equivalent by reason of their genealogical identity, in whole, as between full (uterine, i.e. *soog*) siblings, or in part, as between patrilineal siblings. There are degrees of social equivalence corresponding to degrees of genealogical identity; so that *soog* siblings are more nearly equivalent than half-siblings and half-siblings than ortho-cousins, and so on.

In regard to their social roles, their rights, and their duties, wherever these are determined by descent, siblings are therefore the more closely identified the nearer they are to one another genealogically, and that

[1] A chiefship is always vested in a particular clan or maximal lineage. Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. iv.

[2] A 'brother' of a different medial lineage is meant here.

3: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1949
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if it suits their purpose. Men have always been prepared to go to great lengths to win an office so coveted as that of a chief or tɛndaana. In addition, they argue, the breach of custom is not so outrageous as it seems. For the *ahɔŋ* can claim that if his mother had been born a man he would have had an unquestionable right to the office.

This argument gains strength from the fact that in certain cases an *ahɔŋ* or a sororal lineage is delegated to exercise rights vested in a particular office or lineage. Thus the people of Tongo maintain that in former times the Chief of Tongo always had the right to 'strip (*yɛa*)' all locust-bean trees in Tongo and the adjacent settlements, including Tɛnzugu. Now it would have been neither tactful nor dignified for the chief to send his wives or clansmen to strip locust-bean trees growing in another settlement. Therefore every chief delegated one of his 'sister's sons' in each settlement to harvest the pods for him. The *ahɔŋ* was entitled to keep some of the locust-bean pods he harvested, but had to send the bulk to the Chief of Tongo. Tongo people say that the 'sisters' sons' gradually ceased sending the chief's share to him and took full possession of the trees, in much the same way as a man obtains *de facto* possession of land loaned to one of his ancestors by a matrilateral kinsman.

Certain powers normally held by tɛndaanas only are sometimes vested in lineages that do not have tɛndaanas. Thus at Tongo the people of Seug live on land that comes under the ritual jurisdiction of the Zoo Yiraaŋ.[1] But when they dig a new grave they do not send for the Yiraaŋ to come and 'mark out the grave (*kyɛbɔg voor*)' ritually, as they should do, according to the letter of custom. The head of one segment of Seug performs the rite instead. He keeps the carcass of the goat sacrificed, but sends the head and skin to the Zoo Yiraaŋ. This arrangement is found wherever people of one clan live on land that falls under the ritual jurisdiction of another clan. The regular explanation is that an ancestor of the lineage head who actually marks out the grave was an *ahɔŋ* of the tɛndaana who had ritual jurisdiction over the land when the lineage first settled there, and that the tɛndaana delegated this ritual duty to him and his successors.

The Ahɔŋ as Intermediary

By his genealogical position an *ahɔŋ* forms a link between his father's lineage and his mother's lineage; and by extension this applies to every degree of matrilateral kinship. Hence an *ahɔŋ* is always chosen as intermediary in all private jural and ritual transactions between a segment of one clan and a segment of another. Marriage is the most important of these transactions. A key role in all the jural and ritual formalities necessary for the conclusion of a marriage is that of the

[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 169.

3: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1949
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604 584 *pɔɣasama*. As has been previously stated, he is a clansman of the bridegroom who is also an *ahəŋ* of the bride's clan—*ahəŋ* being understood to include any sororal kinsman of whatever degree. The reason for this choice was well put by a group of elders with whom I discussed this subject. 'He (the *pɔɣasama*) is our (the bridegroom's clan's) person and is also their (the bride's clan's) person. He may not deceive us nor may he deceive them. If he deceives either of us the ancestors will not permit it.'[1]

604 584 764 The *pɔɣasama* appears in every transaction between the two parties to a marriage. He takes the placation gifts (*lu sɛndaan*) to the bride's father. When, later, the bride's father sends messengers (*duondɛm*) to demand the bride-price, the *pɔɣasama* conducts them to the person responsible for paying the bride-price and assists in the negotiations. Many a marriage is saved by the skill and patience of a *pɔɣasama* in persuading the bride's people and the bridegroom's people to a compromise on the question of bride-price payments. He must be present whenever bride-price payments are made; for if, at any subsequent time, a dispute should arise as to what was paid, his word is final. The *pɔɣasama* also acts as intermediary in all the formal claims, services, and duties that arise between the parties as a result of the marriage. He is the messenger who goes to announce the birth of her first child to the bride's parents. If a woman's father or mother dies, the *pɔɣasama* conducts the party sent by her husband with his obligatory food contributions to the funeral, and he hands these contributions over to his 'mother's brother's lineage (*ahəb yidɛm*)'. In this and similar jural or ritual relations between the husband's people and the wife's people, the *pɔɣasama* has to be present both as a witness of the transaction and as a mediator, in case the recipients object to the quantity or quality of the food contributions or the payments offered. For though the obligations of the parties in such situations are clearly defined by custom, there is room for much quibbling over details. Custom declares that a man must kill and cook a goat or a sheep to send to his father-in-law's funeral at a certain stage. But one man will, out of generosity or as a special sign of respect, kill a large goat, whereas another will be mean and choose a puny animal. I have seen violent arguments arise between a son-in-law's messengers and his late father-in-law's lineage over a point of this sort. The mere presence of the *pɔɣasama*, even if he is but a young lad, has a conciliatory influence. As will be remembered, the *pɔɣasama*'s role does not come to an end on his death. It passes to his brothers and sons, like any other attribute of his social personality.

604 778 There are other situations in which an *ahəŋ* acts as intermediary between the members of his paternal clan and his matrilateral clan. For example, the setting up of a divining (*bakologo*) shrine for a man is done

[1] *'U a tam nit ka le a bam nit; u ku too m-paah tam, u ku too m-paah bam-mi; ɔn paah ti sɔ kpiinam la ku saɣi.'*

4: Fortes and Fortes E-5 (1934-1936) 1936
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PRODUCTIVE CYCLE	FOOD CYCLE
SEPTEMBER: Harvesting ground-nuts and other subsidiary crops (roots and legumes) begun. Hoeing and weeding of bush farms continue. Women plucking green ocro and burning early millet stalks for *bakaa*.[2] Ritual festivals commence.	Those who harvested in July already reaching end of supplies of early millet, and resort to market and relatives.[1] Early millet very expensive in market. New ground-nuts (partly green), roots, and legumes supplementing diet largely.
OCTOBER: Harvesting of guinea-corn, rice, root crops, legumes, &c., general. *Neri* lifted. Women drying and storing vegetables.[3]	Food becoming plentiful. Price of grain falling rapidly in market. Cooked food cheap and plentiful in market. Marriage season begins.[4]
NOVEMBER: Harvesting late millet on bush farms, cow-peas and Bambara beans. Women burning valley grass for *ziem*. Children gleaning ground-nuts in play, not because of hunger. Height of ritual festival season.	All kinds of food plentiful. Harvest festivals, during which enormous quantities of food are consumed and circulated and many animals sacrificed, giving the maximum meat supply of the year, and root crops including purchased yams especially in demand for the festivals. All foodstuffs abundant and cheap at market.[5]

[1] Early millet appears in some quantity in the market only at this time; but the prices are about twice the average price of grain. There is some aversion to selling early millet on account of its function in the food cycle.

[2] *Bakaa* is not only used in cooking, but is also chewed with tobacco; hence, there is always a sale for it. The women collect the stalks from their husband's fields, but the *bakaa* is their own property.

[3] With the guinea-corn harvest comes the season of plenty. The tempo of social life and the configuration of social interests changes as completely as the landscape and the climatic conditions. On the economic side attention is at first directed to the selection of seed for storage and the drying and stacking of the grain in the granaries. Women dry and store all kinds of vegetables, especially the much-valued ocro.

[4] The ritual and social activities which dominate this season all require great expenditure of foodstuffs. Marriage involves a period of courtship, during which the suitor brings frequent gifts of guinea-fowls and tobacco to the girl's father and mother. A few days after marriage, the bridegroom sends a large basket of grain and several guinea-fowls to his mother-in-law, and finally has to supply several chickens and guinea-fowls for the legal formalities. The transfer of bride-wealth cattle does not affect the domestic economy materially. Altogether, a man is fortunate if his expenditure is not more than 15 to 20 birds, a block of tobacco (costing 1*s.* or more), a couple of baskets of grain, and a few shillings in money. The girl's family gains correspondingly.

[5] The Harvest and New Year Festivals are celebrated in November. Fowls,

5: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937)1938 FE11 Tallensi FE11

system and his or her gradual acquisition of a responsible status in the social structure. By the age of 14 or 15 most girls are already married or being courted in marriage. They take their household duties more lightly perhaps than older women with children, but their childhood education is complete. Their education in the duties and responsibilities of wifehood and motherhood lies outside the scope of this paper. 'To play' now means to join in the dance or to dress up and go to market, there to gossip and flirt. These are recreations merely, like conversation in the evening after a good meal, when the whole family sits or sprawls about in one of the inner courts or in front of the gateway. Such 'play' is educative in quite a different sense to that of childhood.

Boys, too, between the ages of 12 or 13 and 16 to 18 are at the stage of transition from childhood to young manhood. The imaginative play still prominent at the beginning of this period is given up by degrees and usually altogether abandoned when puberty is established. Like the adolescent girl, the boy of 16 or so finds his principal recreation in the dance at certain seasons. He, too, begins to frequent markets when time permits, for he is greatly preoccupied with the opposite sex, with courtship and flirtations and even transient love affairs, and there is no place like the market for pretty girls. An adolescent youth is already applying the deftness and skill acquired in juvenile play or in the arts and crafts of his boyhood to practical ends. A 16-year-old takes an active part in building and thatching and in the manufacture of bows and arrows, or in the practice of crafts like leatherwork or the forging of tools and implements.

The transition from boyhood to manhood can readily be observed in the development of farming interests and skill during this period. The boy of 10 to 12 is extremely keen to plant, hoe and weed. Helping his father, he sows ground-nuts for himself amongst his father's early millet. Frequently he has a small plot of cereals, a few yards square, in a useless corner of one of his father's fields. He hoes and plants and weeds his plot with great energy and zest, though somewhat crudely, borrowing one of his father's discarded hoes for this purpose. He assists his mother to farm her ground-nuts and beans. But his efforts make no difference to the family commissariat or to the care and sustenance given him by his parents. He is still